

ABSTRACT

A personal communications portal maintains presence information about a user who may be available at one or more terminal devices on one or more access networks comprising a multiple access network. The access networks may operate in different transmission modes and may utilize different signaling formats (text, graphics, voice, video, etc.). A watched party specifies preferences as to who may contact him, at what times, on what kind of network and device. A watching party requesting to contact the watched party may be given direct contact information for contacting the user, may be given indirect contact information for contacting the user without being informed of the watched party's whereabouts, may be placed directly in communication with the watched party, or may forward a message to the user. If the caller is forwarding a message to the user or is placed in communication with the user, and if caller and user are using different transmission modes or different signaling formats, the personal communications portal mediates communication appropriately. Further, the personal communications portal may determine the watched party's physical location based upon the presence information received from the multiple access network and possibly from information received related to events which take place outside of the multiple access network, but which are reported to the portal.

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